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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 04 VATICAN 003507

SIPDIS

DEPT. FOR EUR/WE, PD/ECA (SEXTON), WHITE HOUSE FOR JOSEPH
HAGIN, BRADLEY BLAKEMAN AND MARY HAINES, PLEASE PASS TO
NSC FOR AMB. FREID

EMBASSY VATICAN MESSAGE NO. 107/01

E.O. 12958: DECL: 07/02/11

TAGS: PREL, PHUM, IS, EG, CH, ID, PHUM, IS, EG, CH, ID, PHUM, IS, EG, CH, ID,
PHUM, IS, EG, CH, ID, VT, VTPREL, VTPREL, VTPREL
SUBJECT: THE VATICAN-- THE SUPRANATIONAL POWER

REF: 00 ROME 0988

1. (U) CLASSIFIED BY CDA JOSEPH MERANTE FOR REASONS 1.5
(B) AND (D).
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BACKGROUND AND INTRODUCTION
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2. (U) THIS CABLE PROVIDES ADDITIONAL BACKGROUND INFORMATION FOR THE PLANNED PRESIDENTIAL MEETING WITH THE POPE. IT UPDATES REFTEL, OUTLINING ASPECTS OF THE USG-HOLY SEE RELATIONSHIP THAT WE BELIEVE WILL REQUIRE U.S. ATTENTION IN THE NEAR AND MIDTERM. THE MIDDLE EAST WILL FEATURE PROMINENTLY. IN ASIA, VATICAN PRIORITIES WILL REMAIN FOCUSED ON CHINA, TAIWAN, VIETNAM AND INDONESIA/EAST TIMOR. THE VATICAN IS INVOLVED IN MEDIATING AFRICA'S GREAT LAKES CONFLICT, WHILE CUBA LOOMS LARGE AMONG VATICAN INTERESTS IN LATIN AMERICA. THIS CABLE IDENTIFIES AREAS IN WHICH THE U.S. AND THE VATICAN SHARE INTERESTS, AND AREAS IN WHICH THERE ARE POLICY DIFFERENCES.

3. (U) BACKGROUND AND INTRODUCTION (CONT'D): THE HOLY SEE IS A SUPRANATIONAL ENTITY THAT HAS ITS CAPITAL AND TERRITORIAL MANIFESTATION IN THE STATE OF VATICAN CITY. THE UNITED STATES BASED ITS 1984 RECOGNITION OF THE HOLY SEE IN PART ON THE FACT THAT THE HOLY SEE EXERCISES SOVEREIGNTY OVER THE 109 ACRES OF THE VATICAN CITY STATE. HOWEER ALL AMBASSADORS TO THE HOLY SEE, INCLUDING THE U.S. AMBASSADOR, ARE ACCREDITED TO THE HOLY SEE AN NOT/NOT TO THE STATE OF VATICAN CITY. THE VATIAN INSISTS ON THIS POINT TO REMIND THAT ITS REAC AND INTERNATIONAL PERSONALITY IS GLOBAL. FOR PRPOSES OF THIS CABLE, THE TERMS HOLY SEE AND VATICAN WILL BE USED INTERCHANGEABLY.
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4. (U) BACKGOUND AND INTRODUCTION (CONT'D): THE HOLY SEE ISONE OF THE OLDEST CONTINUALLY EXISTING INTERNATINAL ENTITIES. IT EXERCISED TEMPORAL CONTROL OF TE ITAIAN PENINSULA DURING THE MIDDLE AGES, BUT WAS COMPLETELY BEREFT OF TERRITORY BETWEEN 1870 AND 1929. NEVERTHELESS, EVEN DURING THIS PERIOD, MOST NATIONS CONTINUED TO RECOGNIZE THE IT AS AN INTERNATIONAL ENTITY AND MAINTAINED FULL DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS.

5. (U) BACKGROUND AND INTRODUCTION (CONT'D): THE VATICAN IS ONE OF VERY FEW SOVEREIGN ENTITIES THAT HAVE PRESENCE AND REACH IN VIRTUALLY EVERY COUNTRY OF THE WORLD. ALTHOUGH ITS SOVEREIGNTY IS OVER LIMITED TERRITORY, VATICAN TEACHING AND POLICIES CAN INFLUENCE THE OVER ONE BILLION ADHERENTS OF THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH. END BACKGROUND AND INTRODUCTION.

DEVELOPING POLICY TOWARD THE HOLY SEE
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6. (C) IN DEVELOPING U.S. POLICY VIS-A-VIS THIS UNIQUE ENTITY, POLICYMAKERS SHOULD THINK OF THE HOLY SEE AS SIMILAR TO A TRADITIONAL NATION-STATE, WITH A VARIETY OF FACTORS INFORMING ITS FOREIGN POLICY. THE MOST IMPORTANT

CONSIDERATIONS IN ITS FOREIGN POLICY DECISION MAKING
INCLUDE:

-- RELIGIOUS PRINCIPLES/HUMANITARIAN CONCERNS: THE
VATICAN STRIVES TO TRANSLATE ITS RELIGIOUS BELIEFS AND
ITS HUMANITARIAN CONCERNS INTO CONCRETE POLICIES.
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FOREIGN POLICY INITIATIVES BASED ON THESE PRINCIPLES
INCLUDE: SUPPORT FOR THIRD WORLD DEVELOPMENT AND DEBT
RELIEF FOR POORER COUNTRIES, OPPOSITION TO CAPITAL
PUNISHMENT, OPPOSITION TO ABORTION AND CONTRACEPTION, AND
OPPOSITION (ON HUMANITARIAN GROUNDS) TO EMBARGOES;

-- "NATIONAL" SELF-INTEREST: THE HOLY SEE SEEKS TO
PROTECT CATHOLICS AROUND THE WORLD, ITS OWN POSITION OF
INFLUENCE, AND ITS VAST WEALTH. THE VATICAN'S SUPPORT OF
SADDAM HUSSEIN RESULTS FROM ITS DESIRE TO PROTECT 600,000
IRAQI CATHOLICS FROM ISLAMIC FUNDAMENTALISM; ITS REFUSAL
TO PUBLICLY CRITICIZE CROAT NATIONALIST CLERGY IN BOSNIA
STEMS IN PART FROM THE CROAT CHURCH'S STAUNCH DEFENSE OF
THE FAITH DURING THE COLD WAR;

-- HISTORY/TRADITION: RELATIONS BETWEEN THE HOLY SEE AND
SPAIN, PORTUGAL, AND OTHER LATIN COUNTRIES GO BACK OVER
500 YEARS. THE VATICAN'S HISTORICAL RELATIONSHIP WITH
THESE COUNTRIES FREQUENTLY DEMANDS AN ACTIVE FOREIGN
POLICY ROLE;

-- PROSELYTISM: THE VATICAN KNOWS THAT IT MUST

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TAGS: PREL, PHUM, IS, EG, CH, ID, VT

SUBJECT: THE VATICAN-- THE SUPRANATIONAL POWER

CONTINUALLY REFRESH ITS MESSAGE FOR CHANGING TIMES.
VATICAN II IN THE 1960S WAS AN EXAMPLE. INTERFAITH AND
ECUMENICAL OUTREACH IS AN IMPORTANT FOCUS OF THE CURRENT
PAPACY, AND PROSELYTISM/POPULATION GROWTH IN THE THIRD
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WORLD ACCOUNTS FOR MUCH OF THE GROWTH OF THE CHURCH IN
RECENT YEARS.

7. (C) PAPAL HEALTH/SUCCESSION AND WHAT IT MIGHT MEAN FOR
U.S. POLICY: POPE JOHN PAUL II IS SURELY THE MOST WIDELY
RECOGNIZED WORLD LEADER. ALONG WITH THE PRESIDENT OF THE
UNITED STATES, HE ENJOYS THE HIGHEST STATURE AND PROFILE
AMONG WORLD LEADERS. IN EARLY 2000, PRESS
MISREPRESENTATION OF A GERMAN BISHOP'S REMARKS IN THE
POPE JOHN PAUL II'S ABILITY TO CONTINUE IN OFFICE,
SPARKED A SERIES OF SPECULATIONS AROUND THE WORLD ABOUT
SUCCESSION. THE POPE AND THE VATICAN STRONGLY DENIED
THAT HIS CONDITION WAS SERIOUS ENOUGH TO WARRANT
ABDICATION. THERE IS LITTLE SUPPORT FOR THE IDEA THAT
THE POPE WOULD IN FACT RESIGN EVEN IF HIS HEALTH WERE TO
DECLINE PRECIPITOUSLY. THE LIST OF CARDINALS WIDELY
PERCEIVED AS POTENTIAL SUCCESSORS DOES NOT INCLUDE ANY
AMERICANS, AND ONLY ONE ANGLOPHONE. AN ELECTION OF A
EUROPEAN CARDINAL (MOST LIKELY AN ITALIAN) WOULD PROBABLY
RESULT IN ONLY MINOR CHANGES IN VATICAN POLICY AND ITS
CURRENT STANCE ON ISSUES VIS A VIS THE UNITED STATES. IF
THE NEXT POPE IS FROM LATIN AMERICA, ASIA, OR AFRICA, WE
SHOULD EXPECT THE VATICAN TO TAKE POSITIONS FURTHER TO
THE "LEFT OF CURRENT U.S. POSITIONS ON ECONOMIC ISSUES,
BUT FURTHER "RIGHT" ON SOCIAL ISSUES.

MIDDLE EAST
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8. (C) MIDDLE EAST PEACE PROCESS (MEPP): THE HOLY SEE
DENIES WANTING TO BECOME INVOLVED IN THE POLITICAL
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ASPECTS OF THE MEPP, ALTHOUGH IT REMAINS KEENLY
INTERESTED IN WHAT IT TERMS THE "CULTURAL AND RELIGIOUS"
ASPECTS OF THE HOLY SITES IN THE REGION (SPECIFICALLY
JERUSALEM). THE VATICAN MAINTAINS THAT ITS CONCERNS HAVE

BEEN LARGELY IGNORED BY THE USG AND THE ISRAELIS, AND IN 1999 WORKED WITH THE FRENCH AND SEVERAL OTHER EU COUNTRIES IN THE "JERUSALEM WORKING GROUP" (JWG -- SINCE INACTIVE).

9. (C) THE VATICAN WAS CLEARLY DISAPPOINTED WHEN THE USG AND GOI DECLINED TO ASSOCIATE WITH THE JWG INITIATIVE. THE GOI'S DECISION TO ALLOW CONSTRUCTION OF THE NAZARETH MOSQUE CREATED ALARM (AND IN SOME CASES, RESENTMENT) AT THE VATICAN. THE GOI FOR ITS PART WAS CONCERNED THAT THE POPE LEFT UNANSWERED BASHIR ASSAD'S ANTI-SEMITIC INVECTIVE DURING THE POPE'S MAY 2001 SYRIA VISIT. WE CAN EXPECT CONTINUED TENSION IN THESE AREAS. THE HOLY SEE WILL CONTINUE TO SEEK TO PLAY A ROLE IN THE MEPP, WHILE DENYING THIS INTENTION. EMBASSY VATICAN CONTINUES TO RECOMMEND A HIGH LEVEL VISIT TO ENCOURAGE THE VATICAN TO PLAY A MORE CONSTRUCTIVE, OR AT LEAST LESS UNHELPFUL, ROLE IN THE PROCESS.

ASIA
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10. (C) THE VATICAN AND THE U.S. SHARE INTERESTS IN MANY OF THE SAME COUNTRIES (E.G. INDONESIA, CHINA, TAIWAN, VIETNAM), BUT NOT ALWAYS FOR THE SAME REASONS. IN ADDITION TO THE FORMAL CHURCH NETWORK NUMEROUS, OFTEN SEMI-AUTONOMOUS, CATHOLIC MISSIONARY ORGANIZATIONS
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OPERATING THROUGHOUT ASIA HAVE A SOPHISTICATED UNDERSTANDING OF WHAT IS HAPPENING IN THEIR AREA. CONTACT WITH THESE MISSIONARY ORGANIZATIONS PROVIDES UNIQUE INSIGHTS INTO CONDITIONS IN THESE COUNTRIES. THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE CATHOLIC FAITH IN ASIA IS AN EXPRESS GOAL OF THE CHURCH. THE VATICAN AND ITS CONSTITUENT EPISCOPATES ARE ACTIVELY ENGAGED IN DIALOGUES WITH POLITICALLY POWERFUL MUSLIM AND CHRISTIAN ORTHODOX FAITHS. THE RESULTS OF THESE DIALOGUES WILL IMPACT PROSPECTS FOR DEMOCRACY, STABILITY, RELIGIOUS FREEDOM AND A RELATIONSHIP WITH THE UNITED STATES.

11. (C) CHINA: WITH ITS OWN NETWORK OF CONTACTS AMONG CHINA'S UNDERGROUND AND PATRIOTIC CHURCHES, THE HOLY SEE HAS EXCELLENT SOURCES OF INFORMATION REGARDING DISSIDENTS, HUMAN RIGHTS, RELIGIOUS FREEDOM AND GOVERNMENT CONTROL OVER THE POPULATION. THERE IS A CONSTANT CONTROVERSY AROUND THE EFFORTS TO ESTABLISH DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES. THIS ISSUE INVOLVES THE VATICAN'S RELATIONS WITH TAIWAN AND CHINESE GOVERNMENT REGULATION OF RELIGIOUS PRACTICE. BEIJING'S REGULATION AND OFTEN OPPRESSION OF THE CATHOLIC

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 07/02/11

TAGS: PREL, PHUM, IS, EG, CH, ID, VT

SUBJECT: THE VATICAN-- THE SUPRANATIONAL POWER

CHURCH IS PARALLEL TO AND THEREFORE A WINDOW ON PROBLEMS
IN CHINA WITH U.S.-BASED PROTESTANT CHURCHES AS WELL AS
ISLAM AND BUDDHISM. THE CENTRALIZED STRUCTURE OF THE
CHURCH AND THE REPORTING SYSTEM WITH THE NUNCIOS AND
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BISHOPS, NOT TO MENTION INDEPENDENT MISSIONARY GROUPS,
GIVES EMBASSY VATICAN A UNIQUE VIEW OF EVENTS INSIDE
CHINA.

12. (C) VIETNAM: UNOFFICIAL DISCUSSIONS CONTINUE BETWEEN
VIETNAM AND THE VATICAN ON ESTABLISHING DIPLOMATIC
RELATIONS. THE GOV'S ATTEMPT TO CONTROL RELIGIOUS
ORGANIZATIONS IS ONE OF THE MAIN STUMBLING BLOCKS FROM A
VATICAN PERSPECTIVE. THE VATICAN'S ATTEMPTS TO APPOINT
BISHOPS WITH MINIMAL GOVERNMENT INTERFERENCE AND THE
REPORTING PROVIDED BY ITS NUNCIO ON THESE EFFORTS CAN BE
USED AS A GAUGE OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND RELIGIOUS FREEDOM
ISSUES IN VIETNAM.

13. (C) INDIA: INDIA HAS SEEN SIGNIFICANT SECTARIAN
VIOLENCE OVER THE PAST FEW YEARS, AS MUCH AGAINST MUSLIMS
AS CHRISTIANS. RESOLUTION OF THIS VIOLENCE IS A KEY TO

DEMOCRACY, STABILITY AND THE GUARANTEE OF HUMAN RIGHTS. THE VATICAN, LOCAL BISHOPS WHO REPORT TO THE VATICAN, AND VARIOUS MISSIONARY ORGANIZATIONS WILL ALL CONTINUE TO BE ACTIVE OBSERVERS OF HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSES AND DEVELOPMENTS.

14. (C) INDONESIA: EAST TIMOR IS POISED TO BECOME THE SECOND CATHOLIC COUNTRY IN ASIA (THE OTHER IS THE PHILIPPINES). THE VATICAN, THROUGH ITS BISHOPS, HAS BEEN DEEPLY INVOLVED IN RECONCILIATION EFFORTS FOR YEARS. THE VATICAN IS INVOLVED IN RECONSTRUCTION EFFORTS IN EAST TIMOR. IN OTHER PARTS OF INDONESIA WRACKED BY SECTARIAN VIOLENCE, THE CATHOLIC PRESENCE IS LESS PRONOUNCED, BUT CATHOLIC MISSIONARIES PROVIDE INFORMATION ON THE SITUATION. CATHOLIC PRELATES HAVE ALSO ACTED AS

MEDIATORS BETWEEN OTHER CHRISTIAN COMMUNITIES AND MUSLIM GROUPS. VISITS OF THE INDONESIAN FOREIGN MINISTER AND PRESIDENT TO THE VATICAN UNDERSCORE THE INFLUENCE THE VATICAN HAS ON A COUNTRY OF SIGNIFICANT POLICY INTEREST TO THE USG.

15. (C) NORTH KOREA: VATICAN OFFICIALS, AND CATHOLIC RELIEF ORGANIZATIONS PERIODICALLY VISIT NORTH KOREA. WE LEARN FROM THEIR VISITS AND WE CAN GIVE SUGGESTIONS TO OUR CONTACTS FOR POINTS TO RAISE WITH NORTH KOREAN OFFICIALS.

AFRICA
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16. (C) GREAT LAKES: VATICAN CONTACTS ADMIT PRIVATELY THAT CHURCH RELATIONS WITH LATE DROC PRESIDENT LAURENT KABILA BEGAN ON THE WRONG FOOT BECAUSE OF KABILA'S MINDSET AND THE CHURCH'S PREVIOUS ASSOCIATION WITH THE MOBUTU REGIME. REAL HUMANITARIAN CONCERNS AND RELIGIOUS (EVANGELIZATION) CONSIDERATIONS PUT AFRICA ON THE SCREEN AT THE VATICAN. THE VATICAN AFFILIATED SANT'EGIDIO COMMUNITY PLAYS AN IMPORTANT SUPPORTING ROLE IN INTERNATIONAL EFFORTS TO MEDIATE THE CRISIS, KEEPING THE VATICAN INFORMED OF THEIR EFFORTS.

LATIN AMERICA
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17. (C) CUBA: THE POPE'S 1998 VISIT TO CUBA HAS NOT BROUGHT THE KIND OF PROGRESS ON CHURCH FREEDOM SOUGHT BY

THE POPE. THAT SAID, VATICAN-GOC DIALOGUE HAS CONTINUED WITH FOLLOW-UP VISITS TO CUBA BY SENIOR VATICAN OFFICIALS -- AND TO THE VATICAN BY CUBAN COUNTERPARTS. AMONG THE TOPICS OF DISCUSSION: THE GOC'S TREATMENT OF THE CUBAN

CHURCH, THE STATUS OF DISSIDENTS, AND THE EFFECTS OF THE U.S. EMBARGO, ABOUT WHICH THE HOLY SEE SHARES CASTRO'S CRITICISM. THE VATICAN IS QUIETLY LOOKING AHEAD TO THE DAY WHEN FIDEL CASTRO DEPARTS THE SCENE. IT IS CONCERNED HOWEVER, THAT HIS REPLACEMENT CAN ACTUALLY BE WORSE.

EUROPE
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18. (C) THE VATICAN WOULD LIKE TO SEE A UNIFIED, CHRISTIAN (IE. CATHOLIC) EUROPE. AND THEREFORE SHOULD BE EXPECTED TO INTENSIFY ITS DIALOG WITH THE LEADING PROTESTANT GROUPS IN GERMANY AND SCANDINAVIA. THE VATICAN WILL ALSO CONTINUE ATTEMPTS TO ENGAGE THE RUSSIAN CHURCH AND THE ECUMENICAL PATRIARCH IN ISTANBUL IN AN ATTEMPT TO HEAL THE LATIN/ORTHODOX RIFT. VATICAN INVOLVEMENT IN THE BALKANS CAN BE USEFUL TO U.S. POLICY IF IT IS DIRECTED AT PROMOTING CATHOLIC/ORTHODOX

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 07/02/11

TAGS: PREL, PHUM, IS, EG, CH, ID, VT

SUBJECT: THE VATICAN-- THE SUPRANATIONAL POWER

COEXISTENCE. CONTINUED VATICAN CRITICISM OF "U.S. MATERIALISM AND COMMERCIALISM" COULD BE USED BY MANY IN EUROPE TO SUPPORT ARGUMENTS IN FAVOR OF LIMITING U.S.

INFLUENCE AND ACTIVITY ON THE EUROPEAN CONTINENT.
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19. (C) AREAS IN WHICH WE CAN WORK CONSTRUCTIVELY WITH THE VATICAN DURING THE NEXT 12 MONTHS:

-- ETHNIC RECONCILIATION AND CIVIL CULTURE - IN JUNE, PD/ECA DAS BRIAN SEXTON MET WITH VATICAN AND SANT'EGIDIO OFFICIALS DURING A PD/ECA SPONSORED INTER-RELIGIOUS CONFERENCE ON BOSNIA-HERZEGOVINA. EMBASSY VATICAN, WITH DEPARTMENT GUIDANCE, IS SEEKING TO DEVELOP FOLLOW-UP PROJECTS;

-- ANTI-TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS -- POST HAS DEVELOPED TWO PROJECTS IN CONJUNCTION WITH CARITAS (THE VATICAN RELIEF NGO) AND WITH THE ARCHBISHOP OF PESCARA. THESE PROJECTS WILL OFFER EDUCATION, RESCUE, REHABILITATION, AND REPATRIATION TO VICTIMS AND POTENTIAL VICTIMS OF HUMAN TRAFFICKERS. WORKING WITH THE CURIA AND CARITAS THERE IS MUCH MORE GROUND TO BE COVERED IN THIS AREA IN THE NEAR FUTURE.

-- BIOTECHNOLOGY AND AGRICULTURAL TRADE -- EMBASSY VATICAN HAS SPONSORED TWO DISCUSSIONS OF THIS THEME INVOLVING SCIENTIFIC EXPERTS ATTACHED TO THE VATICAN. PROMOTING A MORE POSITIVE VATICAN APPROACH TO APPROPRIATE USE OF GMOS IN THIRD WORLD AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT COULD HELP MAKE GMOS MORE WIDELY ACCEPTED EVEN IN THE DEVELOPED WORLD.

20. (C) AREAS IN WHICH WE SHOULD EXPECT CONTINUED DIFFICULTIES DURING THE NEXT 12 MONTHS:

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-- THE MIDDLE EAST - THE VATICAN WILL CONTINUE TO OPPOSE U.S. EFFORTS TO ISOLATE SADDAM HUSSEIN. WE SHOULD RECOGNIZE THAT THE VATICAN WILL NOT SUPPORT OUR EFFORTS IN IRAQ, AND INVESTIGATE WAYS TO LIMIT VATICAN INTERFERENCE WITH OUR OBJECTIVES. IN ISRAEL, THE VATICAN WILL CONTINUE EFFORTS TO INSERT ITSELF ON THE QUESTION OF THE STATUS OF JERUSALEM;

-- DEATH PENALTY - THE VATICAN WILL CONTINUE ITS CONDEMNATION OF THE DEATH PENALTY. STATEMENTS BY THE POPE ARE LIKELY TO BE USED BY MANY AROUND THE WORLD TO CONDEMN CAPITAL PUNISHMENT IN THE UNITED STATES. THE DEPARTMENT SHOULD CONSIDER IF IT WANTS TO ADDRESS THE ISSUE, AND IF SO, WHAT PUBLIC DIPLOMACY AVENUES TO USE.
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